

STATEMENT FOR THE RECORD

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National Narcotic Officers' Associations' Coalition (NNOAC)

Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, Drug Policy, and Human Resources

Committee on Government Reform

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INTRODUCTION:

Chairman Souder, Ranking Member Cummings, Members of the Subcommittee, I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss the serious immediate and long-term consequences of proposed cuts to Federal funding for multi-jurisdictional drug enforcement programs, specifically the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (Byrne-JAG) formula program and the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) program, and the proposed move of the HIDTA program from the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) to the Department of Justice.

I am the President of the National Narcotic Officers' Associations' Coalition (NNOAC), which represents 44 state narcotic officers' associations with a combined membership of more than 62,000 police officers throughout the nation. I am a veteran police officer and have spent the vast majority of my 33-year law enforcement career assigned to drug enforcement. Last year I retired from state service as an Assistant Chief with the California Department of Justice, Bureau of Narcotic Enforcement and continue to serve in law enforcement as the Director of the Northern California High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (NC HIDTA).

Thanks to the vision and leadership provided by the United States Congress, and this Subcommittee in particular, there is considerable good news to report to the American public regarding our fight against illicit drugs and drug-related violent crime. In recent years, the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) has reported significant reductions in overall drug use. Moreover, our nation has experienced dramatic reductions in both violent crime and property crime over the past several years, in part as a result of our success in battling drug abuse and drug-related crimes on a multi-jurisdictional basis. These successes have caused many of us to look with pride on accomplishments brought about by implementation of a balanced and comprehensive drug strategy. As you know, our national drug control strategy relies on a robust commitment at the Federal, state and local levels to prevention, treatment and the enforcement of Federal, State, and local drug laws.

We have experienced success, in large part, as a result of policies and programs legislated by Congress over the past 20 years. Speaking frankly, Mr. Chairman, I am deeply concerned about

recent budget and policy proposals, which may have unintended consequences. They could gut law enforcement's ability to battle drug-traffickers, and imperil whole states and communities across the nation. The effect of going forward with these changes could be devastating. While the administration's policies have generally been supportive of law enforcement, recently proposed cuts and changes seem to disregard what has worked, and are beginning to lead us down a path we don't want to travel.

THE IMPORTANCE OF DRUG ENFORCEMENT:

Law enforcement is easy to take for granted. Often, we underestimate the significance of security around us, because we become accustomed to living in a relatively secure environment. But Mr. Chairman, taking the life-and-death role of drug law enforcement officers for granted, especially at this time in our history, would be a terrible mistake.

The present drug control budget proposes to take drug law enforcement for granted. If the FY 2007 recommendation for the Federal Drug Control Budget is adopted by Congress, the Byrne-JAG formula program will be eliminated and the HIDTA program will be cut and moved to the Department of Justice. If these proposals are allowed to slip by, they will jeopardize years of institution-building and mission success that we have all helped to build.

Success over the past 20 years has been achieved by the hard work and commitment of America's law enforcement officers, prosecutors, drug court judges, treatment professionals and efforts of the grassroots prevention community, including parents, teachers, clergy, national guardsmen, and community anti-drug coalitions.

In a recent poll of citizens' concerns conducted in the Central Valley of California, the dangers of methamphetamine and meth-related crime ranked higher than war in Iraq, terrorism, rising gas prices, and the economy. Nationwide, drug abuse has been near the top of American families' concerns for over twenty years.

On May 15, 2006 I attended the National Law Enforcement Officer's Memorial service on the steps of the United States Capitol. During that service, President George W. Bush memorialized the sacrifice of 18,000 American law enforcement officers who paid with their lives to make America a safer place to work, live and raise our children. At least seventy of those officers killed in the past six years died while enforcing drug laws. On June 8th I will join thousands of grieving family members at a candlelight vigil led by parents and the DEA to remember our nation's children who have been lost to drugs. These two memorial services are reminders of the importance of drug enforcement and of Congress' role in framing – and maintaining – sound drug policy.

As Americans, we must never give up in our fight to preserve, protect and defend this great nation from the scourge of drugs. To do so would dishonor the memory of my fellow police officers and those who have died as a result of drug abuse. It is our solemn duty to do everything in our power to keep our nation's most precious treasure – our children – safe and drug free.

THE IMPACT OF DRUG TRAFFICKING AND ADDICTION:

While I know the members of this subcommittee understand the true impact of the drug problem, it is easy for discussions in Washington regarding drug policy and funding for drug treatment, prevention, and enforcement programs to become academic. The reality for the 62,000 members represented by the NNOAC – and for law enforcement officers, fire fighters, EMS workers, probation officers, drug court judges, and treatment professionals – is that these issues involve real-life tragedies.

From a personal point of view, my civilian friends often ask me about the physical and emotional toll that thirty-three years of facing the danger of ruthless drug dealers has taken on me. The truth is that as a police officer, you learn quickly to live with constant danger. What keeps me up at night is the death, fear, economic despair, and ruined lives I see as a result of drug addiction and drug-fueled violent crime. I have seen a lot of it. It is hard to watch generations of families succumb to the downward spiral of drug use, abuse, and addiction. It is hard to carry children out of meth houses reeking of poisonous gas. It is hard to see families, like the Angela and Carrell Dawson family in Baltimore, subjected to the vilest form of terrorism at the hands of drug dealers.

Drug enforcement officers are driven in their commitment to fight the scourge of drug abuse by recurring images of innocent children languishing in dirty diapers, living in deplorable and dangerous conditions and suffering from malnutrition and drug-addicted parents who often abuse them and who are unable to care for them. We are driven to face the danger of drug enforcement by witnessing impressionable young lives ruined when they are lured into a culture of crime by adults promising quick money. We see kids become dealers for adults, or lookouts that facilitate the drug sales operations of adults.

I once supervised a raid on a rural California super-lab that was producing more than 100 pounds of methamphetamine per two-day reaction cycle. As we approached the house to execute our search warrant, a large cloud of highly toxic gas began to vent from the house. Upon entry into that dangerous environment, we encountered four armed meth cooks and a woman, eight-months pregnant, who had been in the house for the entire two-day reaction cycle with her two small children.

During another lab raid, I found a teenage boy, an honors student, who lived with his meth-addicted father in a home where two separate chemical fires had flashed through the house, neither of which were reported to the fire department for fear that the meth production would be discovered. That teenager was working to survive, despite the daily danger posed by chemical exposure, explosion, fire, and armed encounters with rival drug dealers.

In deciding the fate of Federal assistance for state and local drug enforcement activities these questions must be asked: With the effects of drug abuse costing more than 28,000 American lives each year, how many more cuts can we afford to make to drug enforcement programs before the goals of our National Drug Control Strategy become impossible to reach? How many more deaths will occur if we abandon what has proved to be a successful and balanced approach of our nation's drug problem by dramatically reducing or eliminating successful drug

enforcement programs such as the Edward Byrne Justice Assistance Grants and the HIDTA Program? The impact of reducing the Federal commitment to assisting local law enforcement fight drug trafficking will deliver a slow but devastating blow to the quality of life in America.

Drug enforcement was hit two years ago when the original Edward Byrne Memorial Grant Program and the Local Law Enforcement Block Grant were consolidated into the Byrne Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program with an overall reduction in funding without a mandate to use those funds for drug-related criminal justice programs. The program again suffered last year when the combined funding total was reduced from \$634 million to \$416 million.

In one example of the impact of the cuts, the governor of Texas eliminated funding for most drug task forces in the state because he determined that available funding was needed for border enforcement. Tragically, that trend of eliminating or decreasing task forces is one that the members of the NNOAC are experiencing throughout the United States despite the demonstrated importance of the role that state and local law enforcement play in the fight against drugs.

According to Department of Justice statistics, state and local law enforcement officers account for 97% of all drug arrests and prosecutions. At a Congressional briefing last year, Tom Constantine, who was the longest serving administrator of the DEA, stated that of the three percent of the drug cases attributed to Federal law enforcement most, if not all, were initiated by state or local arrests and investigations.

DRUG TRAFFICKING IS TERRORISM:

On September 11, 2001, almost 3,000 Americans were murdered by terrorists from foreign lands. The intensity, magnitude, and sheer evil of that single attack were a wake-up call to the world. Ironically, the events of 9/11 overshadowed a different kind of attacks – chemical attacks that occur each day in cities and towns in the form of death-dealing illegal drug trafficking.

We must live with – and prepare for – the threat of foreign terrorism. Still, I believe that drug trafficking and abuse are the most significant continuing threats to our domestic security. We are engaged in a mortal battle with illegal drug trafficking organizations, drug-funded gang activity, and violent drug-related crime.

Illegal drug overdoses killed more than 28,000 Americans in 2003, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The impact on our economy is estimated to be more than \$180 billion each year. But those stark numbers don't paint the complete picture. The unrelenting attack by international drug cartels, American street gangs, meth cooks, and neighborhood drug traffickers is a tragedy that touches every family in America. How can we quantify the lives ruined, opportunities lost, and heartache caused by drug abuse?

Since September 11, 2001, the focus of Federal assistance to state and local public safety agencies has shifted to protecting the homeland from terrorist activities and equipping first responders. Of course, it is important to fund preparedness and response capacity, but that shift has come at the expense of the drug enforcement mission.

That shift has not only affected America's communities, but has impacted aspects of the Global War on Terror. By shifting state and local law enforcement assistance resources to homeland security, we must not lose our focus on drug enforcement and drug prevention. I know you share my concern, Mr. Chairman, that protecting our homeland MUST mean protecting citizens from drug traffickers and violent drug gangs at home. To save the perimeter but lose the heartland would be a hollow victory.

Since September 11th, no child on U.S. soil has been injured or killed in a foreign-organized terrorist attack. But almost every child, regardless of race, gender or economic background will be asked by friends or acquaintances to try dangerous illegal drugs. Each child will struggle with a choice that has the real potential to ruin their life, a choice that – wrongly made – will cause them to sacrifice their health, mental state, education, and family. Stumbling into the world of drugs will likely force them to be estranged from family, friends and faith, far too often robbing them of life itself. Unfortunately, many of our nation's young people will make that life-altering choice this year – a choice with devastating results.

We don't allow ourselves to fight terrorism with one hand tied behind our back. Yet, the current Byrne-JAG budget proposal would tie the strong hand of state and local law enforcement behind its back by reducing support for multi-jurisdictional drug enforcement. Congress must not let this happen.

TASK FORCES WORK:

Contrary to statements in the Administration's budget request, multi-jurisdictional drug task forces have demonstrated clear results. Notably, on Byrne-JAG, the PART process cited by the administration omits key achievements by individual Byrne-funded task forces. According to data compiled by the National Criminal Justice Association, based on detailed metrics submitted by individual State Administering Agencies for 2004, task forces funded in part by Byrne-JAG were responsible for:

- 54,050 weapons seized
- 5,646 methamphetamine labs seized
- \$250,000,000 in seized cash and personal property (does not include the value of narcotics seized)
- Massive quantities of narcotics removed from America's streets, including:
 - 2.7 million grams of amphetamines/methamphetamine
 - 1.8 million grams of powder cocaine
 - 278,200 grams of crack
 - 73,300 grams of heroin
 - 75 million cultivated and non-cultivated marijuana plants
 - 27 million kilograms of marijuana

These results are real. They are quantifiable. They are defensible. And they indicate the power of using Federal dollars to leverage massive state and local investment in public safety.

Drug traffickers and drug facilitators are not bound by the borders of one state, any more than they are bound by the borders of one nation. Criminal mobility is why multi-jurisdictional task forces are critical in battling this threat to our personal, community and national security. A joint approach is critical in targeting drug trafficking organizations. Multi-jurisdictional task forces are the lifeblood state and local drug law enforcement; they help reduce the impact of drug and firearm traffickers, gangs such as MS-13, pharmaceutical diversion, and organized crime in America's communities by linking organizations with information, leveraged assets, and a real-time advantage for law enforcement.

Another argument used by ONDCP in supporting previously proposed budget cuts to the HIDTA Program and the elimination of Byrne-JAG is that with recent reductions in crime and drug use, financial resources should be shifted to other priorities. I could not disagree more with this statement. We witnessed, in the early 1990s, what happens when resources are shifted away from the fight against drugs – drug usage and crime rates increased. We should embrace the Byrne-JAG formula program because it works; we should not look for reasons to dismantle it.

Since September 11th, there has been ongoing criticism that Federal law enforcement, the intelligence community and the Department of Defense did not adequately share information to reduce the risk of terrorism. Thanks to the HIDTA Program and Byrne-funded multi-jurisdictional drug task forces, Federal, state and local drug investigators are co-located and working cooperatively in cities, towns, and rural communities throughout the country. Agencies across the nation have established trusted relationships and make excellent use of the Regional Information Sharing Systems (RISS) and the HIDTA Intelligence Centers (ISCs), and are de-conflicting tactical operations and sharing case information in accordance with the National Criminal Intelligence Sharing Plan.

With regard to HIDTA, that information sharing would not occur without the cooperation that comes when agencies have the resources and ability to be housed together with a unified command structure working to address a common regional strategy that is funded federally but administered by balanced Executive Boards that equitably represent the interests of all participating agencies. Our information sharing and investigative cooperation is enhanced even more because our grant guidelines and Executive Boards mandate that cooperation.

BYRNE FORMULA GRANTS LEVERAGE FEDERAL DOLLARS:

The Administration argues, and some in Congress believe, that the Federal government has gotten too deep into funding state and local law enforcement activities. I agree that Federal funding should not supplant state and local funds for local activities, but I strongly disagree that Byrne-JAG and HIDTA fall into this category. The Byrne Justice Assistance Grants fund multi-jurisdictional task forces that don't replace state and local funds, but rather provide the incentive for local agencies to cooperate, communicate, share information, build good cases, and pursue organizational and regional targets rather than just individual dealers. Both enforcement targets are valid and necessary, but without task forces law enforcement would revert to working within their own stovepipes and arresting targets of opportunity rather than focusing on organizational targets that have a disproportional impact on the problem. Drug enforcement would revert back

to the days when I first started working narcotics in 1978 when we worked within our own teams without cooperating or using intelligence to lead us in drug trafficking investigations.

Drug trafficking is an interstate and international problem which necessarily calls for Federal involvement. The best way for the Federal government to assist state and local law enforcement is through multi-jurisdictional drug task forces which take full advantage of state and local ground-level intelligence and expertise, but which contribute to Federal investigations of regional, national, and international drug trafficking organizations.

Byrne-JAG formula funding, when spread across the country, is too thin to supplant funding by state and local governments for justice and law enforcement programs. The minimal funding that the Byrne-JAG formula provides leverages state and local investment in justice programs to enhance cooperation, implement best practices, and improve training of peace officers and prosecutors. In addition, the program properly recognizes the critical role that the Federal government has in addressing America's crime problem. A national, integrated threat demands a national, integrated response with state and locals leading the way, but with the Federal Government providing meaningful support.

In reviewing programs around the country, many Byrne-JAG or HIDTA-funded task forces contribute between \$30 and \$40 of state or local funding for every Federal dollar received. This leveraging of Federal dollars creates the incentive and ability for successful drug enforcement that not only addresses the local drug threat but also coordinates investigative efforts against national and international drug trafficking organizations. These Federal dollars don't replace state and local funds, but rather provide the incentive for local agencies to cooperate, communicate, share information and build good cases.

Drug enforcement has come a long way in the past fifteen years, but that hard-earned improvement will wane if Federal resources are not available to help continue the multi-jurisdictional task force model and the concept of intelligence-led policing. Byrne-JAG formula funding that is used by states for multi-jurisdictional drug task forces is rarely used to pay for personnel. It is primarily used for facility leases, overtime costs, vehicle leases and technology that is necessary for effective multi-jurisdictional drug enforcement efforts. Byrne funds are truly the glue that holds together multi-jurisdictional drug units throughout America.

The Byrne Justice Assistance Grant formula program allows states, counties, and municipalities to allocate funds each year to state and local programs that address pressing crime problems in their areas. But Byrne-JAG represents only a small fraction of the massive resources state and local governments drive into direct justice expenditures. In 2002, the latest year for which aggregate Census Bureau statistics are available, the following amounts were spent by state and local governments on justice programs:

- State Direct Justice Expenditures: \$60,295,081,000
- Local Direct Justice Expenditures: \$87,151,684,000
- Total State and Local Justice Expenditures: \$147,446,745,000

The same can be said of the HIDTA program. HIDTAs, like Byrne-funded task forces, provide agency-neutral environments with balanced management led by an Executive Board with equal Federal, state and local participation. This neutrality and balanced system of governance fosters information sharing, tactical and subject deconfliction, and local and regional intelligence analysis that most state and local agencies simply don't have the resources or training to perform themselves, and that Federal agencies are inadequately focused and equipped to perform.

Inexplicably, the FY 2007 Budget Request does not acknowledge the importance of Federal partnerships with state and local governments in fighting crime. Reducing Federal involvement by cutting or eliminating programs that invest in state and local law enforcement, drug interdiction, prevention, treatment, community corrections, rehabilitation, re-entry and juvenile justice programs makes no sense. Such an act would reverse the trend toward enhanced cooperation that has contributed to the dramatic crime rate reductions of the past ten years.

Since FY 2002, funding for justice assistance programs in the Department of Justice has fallen dramatically from \$2.2 billion to \$800 million – a cut of more than 63%. While reductions in crime and drug use rates over the past 10 years have been significant, they have leveled off over the past two years. The majority of the reductions occurred when state and local law enforcement assistance accounts were funded at high levels. Although impossible to draw a causal link between robust funding for justice assistance programs and reduced crime rates, the correlation cannot be ignored. Improved information sharing, cooperation, equipment, and training for state and local law enforcement has contributed to more orderly communities and more effective law enforcement.

GROUPS JOIN TOGETHER TO SAVE BYRNE AND HIDTA:

Twenty-two professional organizations representing the criminal justice community and state and local government entities met early this year to discuss serious budget concerns regarding the Byrne-JAG formula program. Fifteen of those groups, including the National Alliance of State Drug Enforcement Agencies, International Association of Chiefs of Police, National Sheriffs' Association, National District Attorneys' Association, National Association of Counties, Major City Chiefs' Association, Major County Sheriffs' Association, National Association of Drug Court Professionals, National HIDTA Directors, National Troopers' Coalition, and others signed a letter to urge Congress to fund the Byrne-JAG formula program FY 2007 at the authorized level of \$1.1 billion. I would like to submit the letter for the record. Congress authorized this level of funding earlier this year in the Department of Justice Appropriations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 2006-2009.

This is the first time in my career that such a broad range groups has felt strongly enough about a single public safety issue to join forces on a common goal. Many of these groups have jointly met for meetings with congressional leadership to discuss the importance of adequate funding for the Byrne-JAG program. Several of the groups participated in a joint briefing on the importance of Byrne-JAG funding issue for congressional staff.

Mr. Chairman, the NNOAC is not alone in calling on Congress to recognize the importance of the Byrne-JAG formula program. Together, these groups represent hundreds of thousands of public servants and they are united in their focus.

DRUGS FUEL VIOLENT CRIME:

Violence, intimidation, and disinformation are the primary tools of drug traffickers. Drug criminals use force and intimidation to control turf, ensure the swift payment of drug debts, and deter those who might cooperate with law enforcement. A 1997 Bureau of Justice Statistics study of state prison inmates found that criminals who were under the influence of drugs while committing their crime accounted for 27% of all murders and 40% of robberies, a dramatic example of the link between drug use and violent crime. For this reason, drug law enforcement is critical to reducing violent crime and saving lives.

Experience shows that increases in drug arrests are followed by drops in violent crime. Drops in drug arrests are followed by increases in violent crime. In 1994, the New York Police Department implemented a program that targeted individuals and drug gangs that were believed to be responsible for much of the city's violent crime. The department targeted all levels, from street dealers to the drug kingpins that were responsible for supplying the bulk of the drugs that made their way to the streets of New York.

The results were nothing short of phenomenal: from 1994 to 1998, narcotics arrests doubled from 64,000 to 130,000 while serious and violent crimes dropped from 432,000 to 213,000. New York City's per capita homicide rate was reduced to that of Boise, Idaho. The cumulative effect of this multi-year trend was that as many as 750,000 people were spared from being the victims of violent crime and as many as 6,500 of our fellow human beings are alive today who would have been the victims of a homicide if had not been for aggressive law enforcement.

LEADERSHIP IN THE FIGHT AGAINST DRUGS:

The purpose of the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) is to establish policies, priorities, and objectives for the nation's drug control program. The NNOAC vigorously supported the confirmation of ONDCP Director John Walters in 2001. Mr. Chairman, I cannot understand how – given the importance of state and local law enforcement in this nation's drug control strategy – this Drug Czar can support recommendations by the Office of Management and Budget to eliminate or dismantle the most effective state and local drug control programs in the nation – the Byrne-JAG formula program and HIDTA. These proposals only make sense if ONDCP's "priorities and objectives" include reducing cooperation and coordination among law enforcement against drug trafficking organizations.

Over the past four years, a disturbing pattern has developed of ONDCP being uninformed or uninvolved in critical aspects of national drug control policy. In our experience, only the Deputy Director for State and Local Affairs, Mr. Scott Burns, and his staff at the Office of State and Local Affairs (OSLA) have reached out to key stakeholders in law enforcement, prevention and treatment, and have worked tirelessly to support the HIDTA program.

The National Drug Control Strategy has become largely irrelevant in the eyes of many constituencies it is intended to guide. It has not adequately identified drug threats, nor has it provided the guidance needed to coordinate efforts to address our nation's complex drug problem. A glaring example of the inadequacy of this important document is the failure to identify and strategize a response to the threat posed by methamphetamine.

For several years, while Congress, law enforcement, the media and average Americans were sounding the alarm on the unique threat posed by methamphetamine, ONDCP leadership remained silent and did little to coordinate Federal action on the problem. Only when members of Congress led by you, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Cummings and the Speaker of the House demanded action, did ONDCP reluctantly acknowledge the need to comprehensively address the problem.

The leadership at ONDCP has turned their back on American drug law enforcement, by consciously supporting elimination of the Byrne-JAG program and the transfer of the highly successful HIDTA program to the Department of Justice. These cuts would result in elimination of most multi-jurisdictional task forces and would scale back information sharing and collaboration among law enforcement agencies. The office has also shown a lack of support for community anti-drug grant programs by suddenly, arbitrarily and inexplicably de-funding prized community-based drug prevention efforts.

Last month's recess appointment of a new Deputy Director for Supply Reduction, despite the nominee's lack of operational experience, opposition to the nominee by law enforcement organizations, and opposition by a majority of the Senate Judiciary Committee was an ill-advised move by ONDCP leadership. Most recently, three days after the American public learned of Mexico's plan to legalize drug possession earlier this month, ONDCP's Director released a startling and odd statement praising Mexico for its dedication to fighting illegal drugs, without commenting on the impact of the legalization legislation.

While the NNOAC strongly agrees with Director Walters that narcotics legalization is – and always will be – a dangerous course in any nation, and NNOAC commends his efforts to help Canada beat back narcotics legalization, ONDCP's silence on Mexico's legalization efforts was disturbing.

Effective leadership entails frequent stakeholder communication. ONDCP leadership, with the exception of Mr. Burns, has failed to consult with law enforcement practitioners who have valuable insight and advice on the importance of Federal investment in state and local drug enforcement programs, the nature of various drug threats, and the crafting of a meaningful National Drug Control Strategy.

Last year, when supporting the elimination of Byrne-JAG and changes to the HIDTA Program, ONDCP leadership failed to consult with the NNOAC, National Sheriff's Association, International Association of Chiefs of Police, the Fraternal Order of Police or the HIDTA Directors. The continuing lack of consultation with experts in drug enforcement resulted in the adoption of an amendment during House consideration of ONDCP reauthorization directing ONDCP to consult with law enforcement in the development of drug control strategies. The

amendment was offered by Rep. Terry with your support, Mr. Chairman, and we are very grateful for your recognition of the value of our expertise.

Progress in the fight against drugs has been achieved through sustained leadership of dedicated members of the House and Senate. Unfortunately, ONDCP has not listened to Congress on important drug issues. Part of ONDCP's responsibility is to use the "bully pulpit" to carry a strong anti-drug message to every American, identify and coordinate response to emerging drug threats such as methamphetamine, and support America's drug enforcement partnerships, including state and local law enforcement - the community that makes 97% of all drug arrests in America.

In a recent written response to questions posed by you, Mr. Chairman, Director Walters cited a lack of demonstrable results as one of the reasons that he was supporting elimination of Byrne-JAG funding. The Director is wrong. He cited OMB's Performance Assessment Rating Tool (PART), which he also cited last year when acceding to drastic budget cuts in the HIDTA Program. Since that time, the Performance Measures Program (PMP) developed by the HIDTA Directors, reviewed by this committee and other leaders in the Congress, has clearly validated the dramatic results produced by America's twenty-eight HDTAs.

RETAIN HIDTA AT ONDCP:

The Administration's FY07 Budget proposes to transfer the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) Program to the Department of Justice from the Office of National Drug Control Policy. Again, this reflects a poor understanding of the critical needs in the field, the record of HIDTA success, and how we got here. We oppose this transfer because it could create a Federal-state imbalance within individual HDTAs and could lead to reduced state and local participation, which is the cornerstone of the program's effectiveness. Transferring HIDTA to the Department of Justice would compound the damage already done to Federal, state and local law enforcement partnerships as a result of recent reductions in funding for other justice assistance programs.

CONCLUSION:

If we agree that drug abuse in America is a national problem – with enormous potential impact on every state, congressional district, community and family – and one that requires a coordinated international, national, state, and local law enforcement response; if we agree that drug abuse poses a significant threat to the security of our nation on many levels; if we agree that drug profits fuel terrorism and weaken our ability to respond to terrorist threats; and if we agree that drug trafficking and drug abuse presents a palpable risk to our families, then we should all reach the same conclusion: A coordinated strategy that includes all levels of government, including Federal resources for targeted and effective multi-jurisdictional drug enforcement activities, must be a top priority of the Federal government.

The HIDTA and Byrne-JAG formula programs provide a small amount of the overall funding that is dedicated each year to state and local drug enforcement, but their role is pivotal. Their presence is a key to our success. The funding provided through Byrne-JAG and HIDTA provides the necessary incentive for multi-jurisdictional coordination, as well as the essential elements for state and local law enforcement officers to work with Federal counterparts to control the drug epidemic. It is this coordination that has improved the effectiveness of drug enforcement and has helped reduce drug use and violent crime.

If Congress allows either Byrne-JAG or the HIDTA program to be cancelled, cut or diverted; if it reduces or eliminates the balance of governance over individual HDTAs; Congress will effectively cripple multi-jurisdictional drug enforcement at the local and regional levels. Is this really what is best for America? The dedicated law enforcement officers that I represent believe that common sense, a history of success, compelling facts, and the urgency surrounding multi-jurisdictional coordination all support an uncompromising commitment to both Byrne-JAG and HIDTA.

It is time to return to the basics in promoting sound drug policy and providing for the safety of every American from drugs and drug related crime. We must once again embrace those strategies and programs that have led to a safer and more drug free America. We must demand leadership from our nation's Drug Czar. We must work together with enforcement, treatment, and prevention to effectively carry out different but equally important roles in a comprehensive national drug control strategy. We must understand that Federal law enforcement alone does not have the resources necessary to protect Americans from the threat of drugs and gangs. Adequate Federal assistance must be provided in the form of Byrne-JAG formula grants to fund the multi-jurisdictional task forces that provide the first line of defense for cities and towns throughout this nation. We cannot sacrifice the safety of our families and our communities by failing to support drug enforcement.

On behalf of America's narcotic officers, I urge the members of this subcommittee, who have been the leaders in developing our national drug control policies, and in protecting programs that fight back against drugs, to strongly support the \$900 million for the Byrne Justice Assistance Grants formula program in the Senate and House Budget Resolutions. I would also ask you to encourage your colleagues to clearly reject the transfer of the HIDTA Program to the Department of Justice where it will lose its character as a robust collaborative partnership.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Cummings, members of the Subcommittee, I want to thank you for inviting me to share the views of America's narcotic officers. We applaud you for all that you have done to promote sound drug policy. The members of the NNOAC hold you in great esteem and appreciate your service to America.